

**Office of the Cook County Medical Examiner  
Advisory Committee Meeting | July 21, 2017  
Office of the Medical Examiner | 2121 W. Harrison Street  
Lower Level Conference Room | 11:00am**

**Attendance**

**Present:** Dr. Enrique Beckmann, *Medical Profession-Chairman*; Detective Sergeant Jason Moran, *Cook County Sheriff's Office - Vice Chairman*; Susan Dyer, *Funeral Director-Secretary*; Rabbi Moshe Wolf, *Clergy*; Deputy Chief Al Nagode, *Chicago Police Department*; Isaac McCoy, *Citizen/Business*; Edward Calahan, *Funeral Director*.

**Absent:** Chaka Patterson, *Cook County State's Attorney's Office*; Mark A. Rizzo, *Funeral Director*.

**Guests Present:** Dr. Ponni Arunkumar, *Chief Medical Examiner-CCMEO*; Steven Smith, *Safety Officer-CCMEO*; Michael Rodriguez-CCMEO; Carlos Claudio, CCBOA

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

MEAC meeting called to order at **11:20 a.m.** by Chairman Beckmann  
Secretary Susan Dyer does roll call. There is a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from 21Apr2017 meeting were reviewed

**Motion to approve minutes made by Rabbi Wolfe**

**Motion seconded by Mr. Calahan**

**No Discussion**

**Motion passed unanimously by Committee**

**Public Comment**

No members from the public were present for comment.

**Reports**

**Dr. Arunkumar, CCMEO:**

- Today's cooler count is 172 of which 35 are storage cases, 215 is current Maximum Level. Gunshot Wound cases have risen 11% this year.
- Burial of the Indigent, Unclaimed, and Unidentified took place on July 13th at Mount Olivet Cemetery which included Unidentified, Fetal, and Unclaimed Cremated Remains. President Preckwinkle and Cardinal Cupich were present to dedicate a monument and preside over Committal Ceremony.
- CCBOA introduced and passed changes to CCMEO Ordinance to increase Storage Fee for Non-medical ME Cases, Expert Witness and Autopsy Suite usage. This change in Ordinance will take effect in December.
- Staffing: (3) Fellows started in July, (1) Assistant Medical Examiner will start August 1<sup>st</sup>, (1) Assistant Medical Examiner resigned, (4) Assistant Medical Examiner positions remain unfilled, (1) Deputy Chief Medical Examiner position remains unfilled. Currently, there are (15) Medical Examiners on staff.

- The current ME staff is down five (5) employees overall. The CCMEO has approval from Human Resources to hire from international pool of candidates. American Citizens or Resident of United States will be considered first. There is a trend nationally to allow international candidates to fill the approximate 400 forensic pathology openings across the country

**Chairman Beckmann:**

Attendance by Committee Members continue to be an issue. Commissioner Tobolski has resigned from the Committee. (Commissioner Tobolski's letter of resignation was read aloud). Chairman Beckmann expressed hope that these issues would stabilize in the future, Martha Martinez has discussed with President's Office replacing Commissioner and Chicago Police Department vacancies.

State's Attorney Member, Chaka Patterson, has not attended a single meeting since appointment which is a violation of the committee by-laws

**Motion to require that Chairman Beckmann inform in writing the President of the excessive absences and that a replacement or designee be named to replace Chaka Patterson made by Vice-Chairman Moran**

**Motion seconded by Rabbi Wolfe**

**No Discussion**

**Motion passed unanimously by Committee**

Due to the CCMEO stabilizing after several historical problems, the need for the Committee to meet 4 times per year may no longer be necessary. Some have suggested that the Ordinance be amended to have the Committee meet annually or "as needed". President Preckwinkle was receptive to amending the Ordinance to change the meeting requirement.

**Old/New Business**

- Still waiting for approval of Unclaimed Veteran Policy and Procedure to be approved by CCMEO and CCBOA.
- Mr. Rodriguez related that CCMEO Indigent Coordinator is now contacting the VA Office in St. Louis directly for eligibility verification. As a result, the vetting process is taking place more quickly and thoroughly, the delay is still being created by the local VA office referring most unclaimed Veteran cases to a single funeral home.
- Mr. Calahan inquired as to why a single Funeral Home is being contacted by local VA to complete burials when other funeral homes are willing and available to assist. Should incident at local VA be referred to law enforcement?
- The Unclaimed Veteran Subcommittee suggested that there may be other legal options like referral to Inspector General that may hasten approval.

**Adjournment**

Meeting concluded at 12:10 pm (unrecorded Motion to Adjourn)